

# Implementation of Joint Plan of Action on Health and Environment in Malawi

By

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# Country profile

- Land area 119,140 sq km
- 20% of this is water bodies including lake Malawi and other smaller lakes
- Population of the country is 14 million
- Population density 139/sq km
- 50% of the population is under 18 years
- 51% of the population are females & 49% are males
- Fertility Rate is 5.2
- Population Growth Rate is 2.9%
- Life Expectancy 52.4 years
- Rural population 86%

# Health & Environment

- There has been a good working relationship between environment and various sectors including the Ministry of Health on programmes that affect the sectors.
- For example, Malawi National State of Environment and Outlook Report of 2010 contains full chapter on healthy issues.
- Although Malawi is a signatory to the Libreville declaration on health and environment, it has just started to organize for the implementation of the joint action plan.

# Opportunities to prepare a joint action plan on health & environment

- Malawi developed a national strategy for sustainable development in 2004 covering the main thematic areas of water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity among others based on the 2002 J'burg world summit on environment and development declaration
- The National environmental policy of 2004 covers sectoral issues that include health issues.
- The Malawi National State of Environment and Outlook Report of 2010 contains full chapter on healthy issues.

# Opportunities to prepare a joint plan on health cont'd

- The Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) has outcomes of which one of them is *reduced risks to health that* are mostly environmental in nature.
- Currently, government is reviewing the national biodiversity strategy and action plan based on Aichi Global Strategy .
- UNIMA has been working with traditional healers on identifying phyto-chemical properties in medicinal plants and testing their drug efficacies
- Traditional Healers Association are replanting some medicinal plants in some areas.
- Currently the names and use of some medicinal plants are already documented.

# Constraints

- Identifying leadership for the programme has delayed the process to start formulating the joint plan.
- Inadequate coordination on this programme between environment and healthy sectors has made some contribution on the delay to start the programme.
- Intersectoral policies and pieces of legislation addressing issues of pollution control.
- Traditional healers withholding some traditional knowledge on use of species for medicinal applications.
- Inadequate capacity in research for medicinal use particularly equipment to conduct chemical analysis.

# Urgent actions

- The Roadmap for the implementation of the joint action plan shall be developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Health
- Establishment of the Task Team from some major sectors to steer the process of formulating the SANA and Joint Action Plan
- Coming up with the situation analysis to address issues in the Libreville Declaration on health and environment